



BASIC ZONE DEFENSE

10

**PROVEN DRILLS AND PLAYS FOR
LOCKING DOWN YOUR OPPONENTS**

Copyright Notice - IT IS ILLEGAL TO POST THIS DOCUMENT ONLINE

The material enclosed is copyrighted. You do not have resell rights or giveaway rights to the material provided herein. Only customers that have purchased this material are authorized to view it. If you think you may have an illegally distributed copy of this material, please contact us immediately. Please email support@knowledgespotinc.com to report any illegal distribution.

Copyright © eBasketballCoach.com and Knowledge Spot Inc. All rights reserved.

No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or by information storage and retrieval systems. It is illegal to copy this material and publish it on another web site, news group, forum, etc. even if you include the copyright notice.

Legal Notices

While all attempts have been made to verify information provided in this publication, neither the author nor the publisher assumes any responsibility for errors, omissions or contrary interpretation of the subject matter herein. The publisher wants to stress that the information contained herein may be subject to varying state and/or local laws or regulations. All users are advised to retain competent counsel to determine what state and/or local laws or regulations may apply to the user's particular operation. The purchaser or reader of this publication assumes responsibility for the use of these materials and information. Adherence to all applicable laws and regulations, federal, state and local, governing professional licensing, operation practices, and all other aspects of operation in the US or any other jurisdiction is the sole responsibility of the purchaser or reader. The publisher and author assume no responsibility or liability whatsoever on the behalf of any purchaser or reader of these materials. Any perceived slights of specific people or organizations is unintentional. The author and publisher of this document and their employers make no warranty of any kind in regard to the content of this document, including, but not limited to, any implied warranties of merchantability, or fitness for any particular purpose. The author and publisher of this document and their employers are not liable or responsible to any person or entity for any errors contained in this document, or for any special, incidental, or consequential damage caused or alleged to be caused directly or indirectly by the information contained in this document.

Consult Your Physician

The techniques, ideas, and suggestions in this document are not intended as a substitute for proper medical advice! Consult your physician or health care professional before performing any exercise or exercise technique. Any application of the techniques, ideas, and suggestions in this document is at the reader's sole discretion and risk.

Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
ZONE DEFENSE SKILL DEVELOPMENT	
BUMP THE CUTTER DRILL	5
FOUR OUT BOXOUT DRILL	6
HALFCOURT SHELL DRILL	7
ANTICIPATION DRILL	8
CIRCLE CLOSEOUTS DRILL	9
TAKE THE CHARGE DRILL	10
THREE POINT CLOSEOUT DRILL	11
ZONE DEFENSES	
2-3 ZONE	12
3-2 ZONE	13
1-3-1 ZONE	14
MORE RESOURCES	15

Introduction

The zone defense has been around more than a 100 years now. The legend goes that it was invented by Cam Henderson at halftime of a game when he realized that because the roof in the gym was leaking, his players would find it much easier to defend an area than to chase players all around the court.

100 years later, the zone is still a popular defense at all levels of basketball. It has evolved – now we've developed the 2-3, 3-2, and 1-3-1 zones – and they're all effective in their own right. They allow defenses to pack the paint and prevent penetration, encouraging the defense to settle for long range shots. Also, if there's a player who is dominating in a one-on-one matchup, whether in the post or on the wing, it takes the pressure off that individual defender and allows you to defend that player as a team.

The biggest key to playing an effective zone defense is communication - teaching all five defenders to work as one unit, hands up and in constant communication with each other is absolutely essential. It can also be a bit more difficult to rebound in a zone defense – since players aren't directly assigned to a man, it can be a bit more difficult for them to find a body and box out once a shot goes up in the air.

We've assembled a few drills to instill the proper fundamentals to make your zone all it can be, after which we will break down the three most common zone defenses.

Bump the Cutter Drill

Purpose

One of the most common ways of attacking the zone is to pass and cut through the gaps. In this drill, we will teach players how to 'bump the cutter' slowing him down and at the very least making a much more difficult angle for the pass.

Setup

Have the players form two lines, one at each elbow. With a player at the top of the key with the ball, and another just above the dotted line – the defender.

Execution

The player with the ball will pass to either side, and then attempt to cut across the face of the defender. The defender's job is to get inside of the offensive player, bumping him out away from the ball, and then following him down through the cut to defend the pass.

Coaching Tips

You can run this drill a couple different ways – have the defender stay on for a set amount of time, have the offense and defense do three rotations and then get out, or just match players up by size and speed and have them work together.

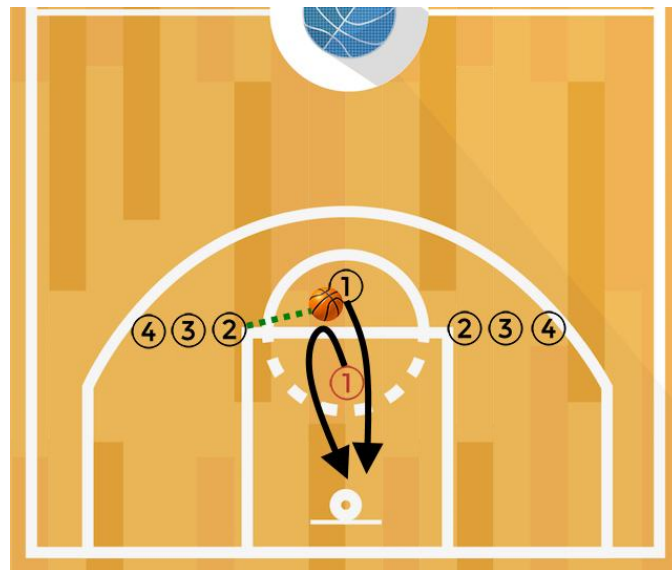


Figure 1: Bump the Cutter Drill

Four Out Box out Drill

Purpose

Oftentimes, since players are assigned zones instead of a man to guard, it can be difficult to properly secure defensive rebounds. To combat this, this next drill will teach players to see the shot go up, find a defender, box him out, and secure the rebound.

Setup

The rebounder will start in the middle of the paint with the ball, with four players spread out just inside the arc. You'll also need a coach to stand on the baseline ready to participate.

Execution

On the coach's signal, the rebounder will start out by passing the ball to the first shooter – #1 as seen in the diagram. As soon as this happens, the coach will point to one of the three remaining players. This designates that player as the offensive rebounder, signaling the rebounder to go box him out. If the offensive rebounder secures the rebound, they will try to score a quick hoop. If the defensive rebounder secures the rebound, they will pass the ball to the coach, who will step up onto the floor to act as an outlet pass. The coach will then pass the ball to the next shooter - #2 – and again call out another player to act as offensive rebounder, until all four players have taken a jumpshot.

Coaching Tips

One of the best ways to keep players motivated for this drill is to keep score. Keep the same five players through for a whole rotation of the drill, allowing them to earn points for offensive/defensive rebounds – and then crown your rebound champion at the end!

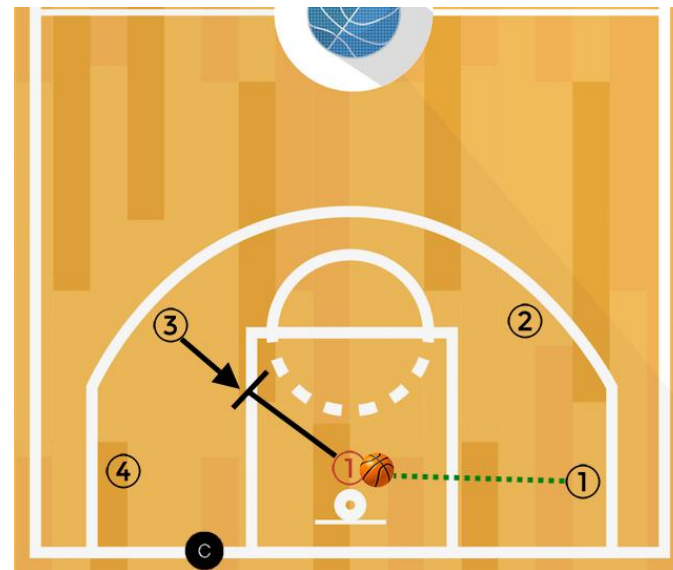


Figure 1: 4 v 1 Box out Drill

Halfcourt Shell Drill

Purpose

Learning how to communicate and work as one unit as a defense is important regardless of whether you're playing a man or zone defense. This next drill allows players to work on tracking the ball, closing out under control, and most important of all, communication.

Setup

You'll need 8 players, paired off in matchups of similar size and skill. The four offensive players will be spread around the arc, and the four defensive players playing defense inside. The offensive point guard will start with the ball.

Execution

To begin, the offense will pass the ball, slowly, around the arc. Giving the defense time to adjust their position and

communicate with each other. As the ball gets passed around the arc, the defense will continue to shift accordingly – if the ball is one pass away, they are in the passing lane, denying the pass to their man, and if they're two passes away, they drop down into help defense. The goal here isn't for the offense to score or the defense to get steals, it's just to teach players the basics of team defense.

Coaching Tips

Don't be afraid to pause this drill at any time. Step in, correct players' positioning, encourage them to be louder – this is a teaching drill, so take full advantage of every teachable moment!

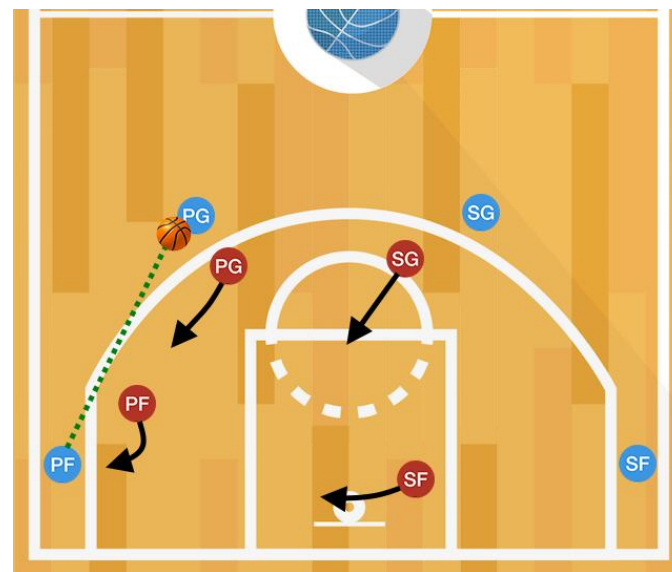


Figure 1: Halfcourt Shell Drill

Anticipation Drill

Purpose

Playing a zone doesn't mean you have to sit back and be passive on defense. This drill will help your players learn to anticipate passes and get into the passing lanes for deflections and steals.

Setup

Three players line up across the foul line facing mid-court. Coach has the ball in mid-court area about 20 feet from the foul line.

Execution

The man in the middle is on defense. The coach attempts to pass the ball to either wing, while the defender tries to intercept or deflect the ball.

After each pass, the wings take one step wider, to make the defender's job more difficult. Rotate the players through after 5 passes.

Coaching Tips

The defender should stay low with his arms outstretched and feet set to move quickly in either direction.

Players can also assume the role of the coach and work on their passing from the top of the key. This is a good time to encourage ball fakes and teach players not to telegraph their passes.

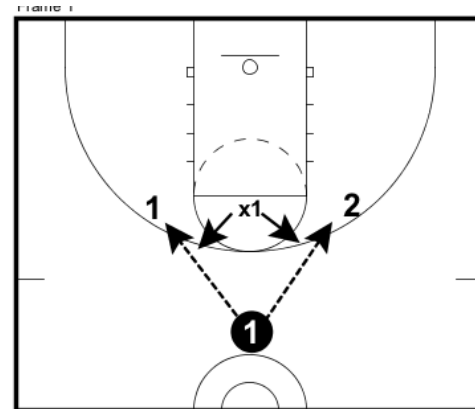


Diagram 1

Circle Closeouts Drill

Purpose

This is an outstanding drill for teaching communication and closeouts inside the zone. As players rotate clockwise, they should point to and yell out the player they are responsible for guarding.

Setup

Place three offensive players around the three point line and three defenders underneath the basket. Coach stands behind the baseline with a ball.

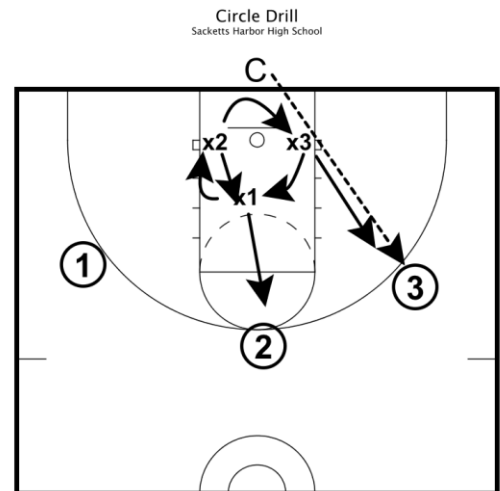
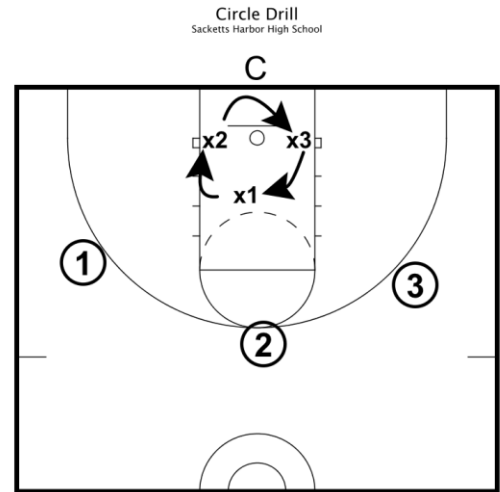
Execution

On the coach's command, the three defenders rotate in a clockwise rotation pointing and yelling out who they would be responsible for guarding if the ball was in play. This changes with every rotation and teaches players to communicate.

After letting defensive players rotate for several seconds, Coach tosses ball out to any of the three offensive players. Defensive players close out accordingly and play 3 on 3 until a score, turnover, or defensive rebound.

Coaching Tips

Let the players make several full rotations before tossing the ball to the offense. Encourage the offense to be in "attack mode" to really put pressure on the defensive closeouts.



Take the Charge Drill

Purpose

Part of protecting the paint in a zone defense is being willing to rotate over and take the charge when necessary. This drill will help players learn the proper footwork and body positioning to complete this play safely.

Setup

Place three offensive players around the three point line and one defender guarding the wing.

Execution

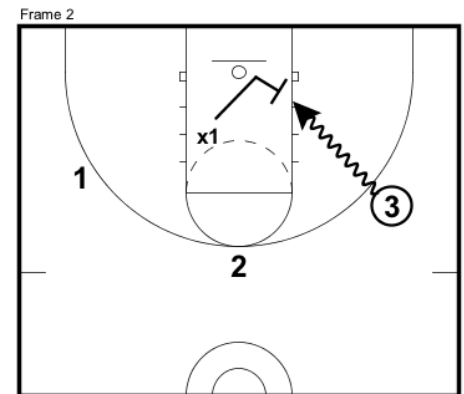
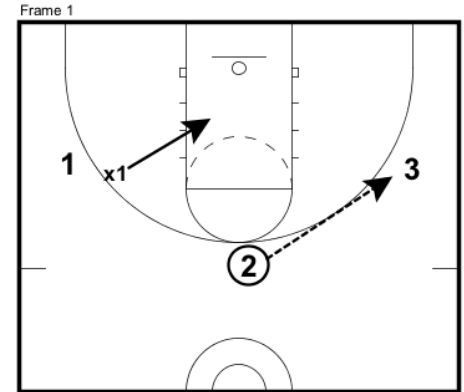
The ball is passed to opposite wing and the defender gets into helpside position, in the middle of the key and dropped slightly toward the baseline so he can see the ball and the man in his zone.

Wing takes the ball and penetrates baseline. Defender comes over and takes the charge.

Ball is then thrown back to top and reversed to wing. Defender must get up and sprint back to man and close out. Defender must now one-on-one defend the ball and finish with a stop and rebound.

Coaching Tips

To start out, place pads in the key to allow players the chance to get comfortable with falling. You can also use a football blocking shield to lessen the contact between players. Remember to keep the hands pointed forward on the fall to avoid wrist injury.



Three Point Closeout Drill

Purpose

Protecting the 3-point line is a vital part of effective zone defense. Players need to learn to close out on shooters under control, preventing open shots and also cutting off the drive.

Setup

Place five offensive players around the three point line with one defender in the middle of the key. Coach has the ball under the basket.

Execution

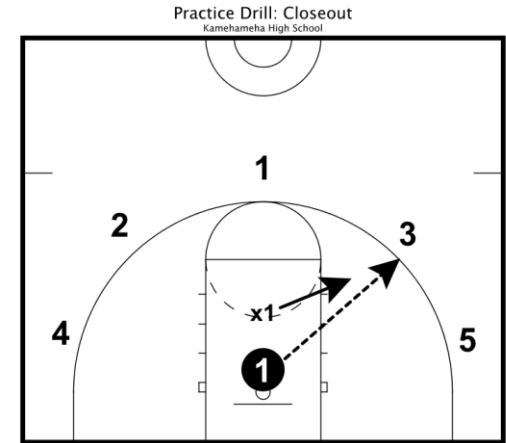
The drill begins with the Coach throwing the ball to 1 of the 5 offensive players.

The defender uses his peripheral vision to see the ball and commences to close out with technique; they go 1 on 1 from there.

The defender must get 3 stops before rotating a new player into his position.

Coaching Tips

Complete the closeout by leaning back slightly as you approach the offensive player. Use short choppy steps and keep your center of balance low. Avoid lunging or jumping - be ready to slide in either direction to cut off penetration.



2-3 Zone

Setup

The point guard and shooting guard will start out just above the elbows, with the center in the middle of the paint, with the forwards on either side of the paint, just outside the block.

Execution

Each player has a designated zone, as illustrated in figure 1. In practice, whenever the ball moves into one of their zones, that player is responsible for covering the man. It's also important that players shift within their zone based on ball movement, anticipating passes and defending the players moving around without the ball as well.

Above all costs, in the 2-3 zone your first priority is defending the paint, so any player in the key should always have at least one of the five defenders on him.

Coaching Tips

The 2-3 is designed to force the opposing team into settling for outside jumpshots, discouraging penetration and post play.

For it to work well, it's important that all five players work as one unit. As such, it's important to give lots of practice time running the zone. It's a bit more difficult than simply following one player all around the floor, but giving it the time it needs in practice will yield fantastic results.

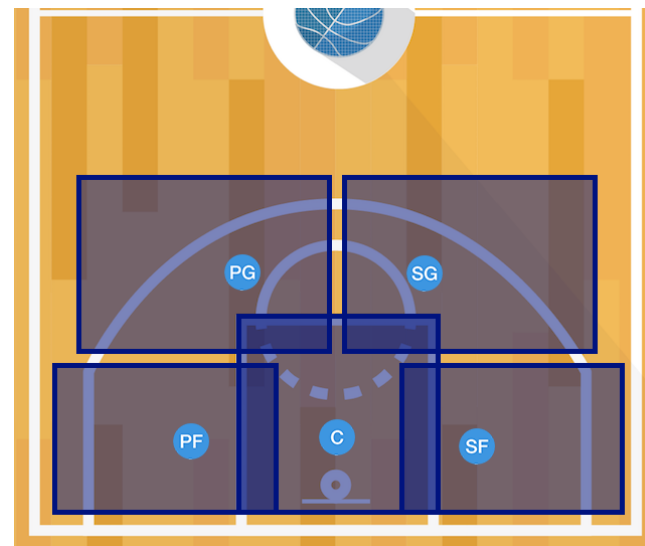


Figure 1: 2-3 Zone Initial Setup

3-2 Zone

Setup

The point guard will position himself at the top of the key, with the shooting guard and small forward on the wings and the power forward and center each occupying a block.

Execution

The 3-2 is a more active zone, especially on the perimeter. The point guard up top should be funneling the ball to either side, while the wings can actively deny the wing entry if they so choose. If you want to run a trap out of the 3-2, the best place is in the corner, as it allows you to send your corresponding wing and post players to attack while the other three are in great position to intercept any wild passes.

Coaching Tips

Where the 2-3 is designed to give easy wing entries and discourage post play, the 3-2 is the opposite. If you're playing a team with wing players that are too difficult to cover man to man, but you aren't too worried about the other team's post play, it can be very effective. It can also be very confusing for offense's, as it is easy to disguise it as a man to man defense, at least initially.

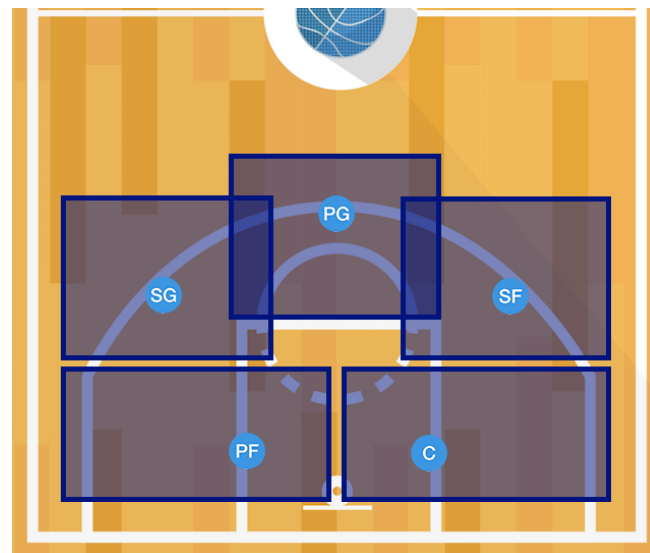


Figure 1: 3-2 Zone Initial Setup

1-3-1 Zone

Setup

Here, we'll have the center line up at the heart of the zone, in the middle of the free throw line, with the other four players spread around him – the point guard up top, the shooting guard and small forward on either wing, and the power forward behind him, in the middle of the key.

Execution

The 1-3-1 is different than other zones in that you are actively trapping and attacking the offense – there's no sitting around as they work the ball around the arc – you are looking to force turnovers and get out in transition. There are 6 trap points for the zone – one on either wing, one in each corner, and then one at each elbow. If the ball is in any of these places, it is the responsibility of the two closest players to trap the ball. This will in turn force high errant passes or slow bounce passes that will give the other three players the chance to step in and intercept the ball.

Coaching Tips

Like any aggressive trapping defense, every once in a while, players are going to be caught out of position, so yes, you are going to give up some easy baskets. But don't be discouraged, as if you drill it hard and have the players all working together in unison, you'll more than make up the difference with all the easy baskets of your own you'll get in transition after you get the steal.

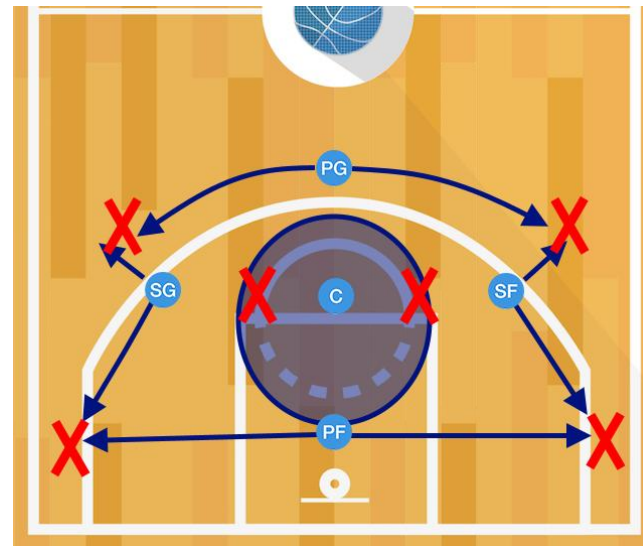


Figure 1: 1-3-1 Zone initial

Looking For More Basketball Coaching Resources?

Visit www.OnlineBasketballDrills.com for a complete listing of playbooks, drill collections, and online video clinics from some of the top high school, NCAA and NBA coaches of all time!

Join us on Facebook! <https://www.facebook.com/BasketballDrillsandPlays>

Subscribe to our YouTube Channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/CoachPat30>

SPECIAL OFFER: You're invited to receive 51 killer drills and 7 proven plays... for just one dollar!

➔ www.BasketballInnerCircle.com/signup